

REMARKS

Applicant's representative would like to thank Examiner Patel for the courtesies extended to him during the personal interview on March 2, 2005. During the interview, Claim 1 and the prior art were discussed.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 102

The Examiner has rejected Claims 1-20 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Preston et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,986,553) as well as by Riesing (U.S. Patent No. 2,804,325).

During the interview, both references were discussed. At the interview, Applicant's representative pointed out that in Claim 1, the entire polymeric lining is movable with the elastomeric lip portion about the hinge portion towards and away from the case. Thus, the polymeric liner is free from any radial contact with the case.

The Preston reference cited by the Examiner illustrates a lip (7) with a polytetrafluoroethylene sealing component (4). However, the sealing component (4) is secured on the lip and the sealing ring component (5) such that the entire portion of the sealing member is incapable of moving with the lip. In fact, the majority of the sealing ring component (4) is fixed with the sealing ring 5 and cannot move. Thus, this reference cannot anticipate Applicant's device. Nowhere does the Preston reference suggest or disclose the entire polymeric liner being movable with the elastomeric lip portion as claimed.

The Riesing reference cited by the Examiner, like the Preston reference, fails to disclose or suggest Applicant's invention. In Riesing, the sealing sheath (48) is fixed

between the annular metal member (40), the flange (30) and the cage (42). Thus, Riesing, like Preston, does provide for the entire sealing member to be movable with the flange, as claimed by Applicant.

Both references fail to disclose or suggest Applicant's invention. In fact, neither reference allows for the movement of the entire sealing portion as claimed by Applicant. Accordingly, Applicant believes Claim 1 to be patentably distinct over both references cited by the Examiner. Likewise, Claims 2-5 which depend from Claim 1 are patentably distinct over the art cited by the Examiner.

Independent Claims 6 and 11 are patterned after Claim 1 and include that the entire polymeric liner is movable with the elastomeric lip portion about the hinge portion towards and away from the case. Thus, the above comments with respect to Claim 1 equally apply to Claim 6 and 11. Accordingly, Applicant believes Claims 6 and 11 to be patentably distinct over the art cited by the Examiner. Likewise, their dependent claims, 7-10 and 12-20, are patentably distinct over the art cited by the Examiner.

In light of the above amendments and remarks, Applicant submits that all pending claims are in condition for allowance. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully request that the Examiner pass the case to issue at his earliest possible convenience.

Should the Examiner have any questions regarding the present application, he should not hesitate to contact the undersigned (248) 641-1600.

Respectfully submitted

Dated: March 14, 2005

By: 

W.R. Duke Taylor
Reg. No. 31,306

HARNESS, DICKEY & PIERCE, P.L.C.
P.O. BOX 828
BLOOMFIELD HILLS, MI 48303